

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 DHA-02 H-01 INR-05 PM-03 PRS-01

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NEA:ARDA

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 168513

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT LE

SUBJECT: HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM IN BEIRUT

1. FYI: WE CURRENTLY ARE CONSIDERING WHETHER THE THREAT
POSED TO THE POPULATION OF BEIRUT BY THE CUT-OFF OF
WATER AND ELECTRICITY, THE SHORTAGE OF MEDICINE AND
HOSPITAL SPACE, AND THE INABILITY TO COLLECT GARBAGE AND
TO DISPOSE OF THE DEAD WARRANTS A SPECIAL EFFORT--PERHAPS
IN THE FORM OF AN INTERNATIONAL APPEAL--FOR A SPECIFIED
TRUCE PERIOD WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE RESTORATION OF VITAL
MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND THE RESUPPLY OF HOSPITALS WITH
MEDICINES AND POSSIBLY VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL.

2. RECOGNIZING THAT SOME MEDICAL SUPPLIES ARE SOMEHOW
GETTING THROUGH TO BEIRUT, WE NEED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE
EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM FACING
BEIRUT'S POPULATION, HOW LONG THE POPULATION CAN COPE WITH

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PRESENT CONDITIONS, AND HOW LONG IT MIGHT REQUIRE--UNDER A
TRUCE--FOR VITAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO BE RESTORED.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS INHERENT IN
MOBILIZING ANY INTERNATIONAL APPEAL AT THIS TIME, BUT IT
WOULD BE UNCHARACTERISTIC FOR THE U.S. NOT TO DO WHAT IT
COULD TO FORESTALL A GRAVE HUMANITARIAN DISASTER. KISSINGER

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